names of the countries where posts of Ambassadors/High Commissioners are presently lying vacant are as follows:

1.China

2. Lebanon

3. Madagascar

4. Mozambique

5. Maldives

6. Trinidad and Tobago

7. Uganda

8. DPR Korea

(b) and (c) All posts of Ambassadors and High Commissioners are IFS cadre posts and normally IFS officers of requisite seniority and experience are appointed by the Government against these posts. However, from time to time Government also appoints against particular posts individuals who have distinguished themselves in public service or other fields. At present there are 86 serving IFS officers and one serving IAS officer who are Ambassador/ High Commissioners. There are 8 retired officials in the category of individuals who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields serving in this capacity.

Border dispute with China

162. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER:
SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV:
SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any talks to resolve border dispute with China have been held recently; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) At the seventh Round of official level Talks between India and China held in Beijing from July 21 to 23, 1986 substantive discussions were held on the boundary question. The Chinese side reiterated that the Eastern sector was the area of "largest dispute". In response, the Indian side clearly enunciated our stand and pointed out that the India-China boundary in the Eastern sector was the traditional customary line which was well known and had, in addition, received sanction by treaty and administrative jurisdiction. During this round, discussions also commenced on the Western sector.

The boundary question was also taken up by the then External Affairs Minister, Shri P Shiv Shanker, in his meeting with the Chinese Foreign Minister, Wu Xueqian on 18th September, 1986 in New York.

Indian Government approached by the United States for release of hostages in Lebanon

163. SHRI SURENDRA SINGH THAKUR:
SHRI TALARI MANOHAR:
SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that US Government have approached the Indian Government for mediation or help in the release of hostages in Lebanon; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Indian Government thereto and the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) In the context of the four persons taken hostage in Lebanon there are three Americans and one is an Indian national the US Government has been in contact with Government on the subject while maintaining that the release of the Indian national taken hostage is the responsibility of the Government of India. Government have been energetically approaching all Governments and agencies which may have

any influence in the matter to secure the release of Dr. Mithleshwar Singh, the Indian hostage.

Chinese introduction in Arunachal Pradesh

164. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the Chinese intrusion and occupation of territory by Chinese troops in Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) what is the outcome of the talks so far held with China with regard to the vacation of the occupied territories and withdrawal of troops by China from the said Indian territories; and

(c) whether any high level talks are likely to be held in the matter, if so, when and at what level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K NATWAR SINGH): (a) In mid-June 1986 Chinese personnel, including some in uniform intruded approximately 2-3 kms., as the crow flies, into the area of the Sumdorong Chu Valley in Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh. The Chinese personnel continue to remain in that area.

(b) and (c) In our talks with the Chinese Government, we have lodged our strong protest on this intrusion into our territory. The Chinese response has been that the area in question was on their side of the McMahon Line. Government of India have categorically rejected the Chinese claim and stressed that the area was well within Indian territory as it was clearly South of the McMahon Line which constituted the international boundary in this sector. Government of India are in touch with the Chinese Government on this question through diplomatic channels.

Solution of Ethnic problem in Sri Lanka

165. DR. BAPU KALDATE:

SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

SHRI F. M. KHAN:

SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK:

SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the development in the recent weeks in arriving at a solution to the problem of ethnic violence in Sri Lanka;

(b) the details of good offices provided by the Government of India to Sri Lankan Government in the matter; and

(c) the prospects of reaching at a solution in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) After the July, 1983 ethnic riots, India offered its good offices for resolving the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka. Since then India has been striving to narrow the differences between the two sides and to work out a package of proposals which meets the legitimate demands and aspirations of the Tamils within the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka. Discussions have been held, and messages exchanged, with the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil groups with this objective.

Following discussions between Prime Minister and the Sri Lankan President in Bangalore in November, 1986, Indian Ministers of State Shri Natwar Singh and Shri P. Chidambaram visited Colombo in November and December, 1986. Based on these discussions, a set of proposals had emerged. But before these could be discussed with the Tamil side, the Sri Lankan government seemed to waver in its commitment to them. Meanwhile, the situation on the ground deteriorated drastically in early January when the Sri Lankan Government imposed an economic blockade on Jaffna and launched a major military action in the Northern and Eastern provinces.